



House Select Committee on Homeland Security Democrats

JIM TURNER, Ranking Member

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INSPECTOR GENERAL CONFIRMS: AMERICA AT RISK

In response to the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General Report released today, Congressman Jim Turner said:

"The Inspector General has said it, we've said it and outside experts have said it: This administration is not doing all it can to keep terrorists from attacking this country."

"I agree with the Department's independent inspector that much has been done to make this country safer, but this is not good enough. We are not as safe as we need to be, and now is not the time to lose our resolve. We must be vigilant."

The 80 page report released by the Inspector General identifies serious security gaps throughout the Department of Homeland Security. Turner identified several areas in which the report's recommendations support the findings of *America At Risk: Closing the Security Gap*, a report released last month by the Democrats on the House Select Committee on Homeland Security (listed below).

"The Madrid bombings and new threats from Al-Qaeda are clear warnings that we must move faster and stronger to protect America from the threat of terrorist attack. This report confirms that more must be done."

Turner also criticized the Republican Budget Resolution that cuts \$155 million in 2005, and \$865 million over the next five years for homeland security.

For the Republicans to weaken our homeland security efforts at this time by cutting funds for our defenses, is a serious mistake."

Similarities between the Inspector General's Report and *America at Risk: Closing the Security Gap*:

INSPECTOR GENERAL: "DHS must develop common standards for information sharing."

HOMELAND SECURITY DEMOCRATS: "DHS should complete the report mandated by Congress regarding the development of information sharing procedures, and should develop a capacity to share terrorism-related information quickly with state, local, and private sector entities in order to optimize their capability to detect and respond to would-be terrorists."

INSPECTOR GENERAL: "TSA was not able to consistently to maintain the highest quality training nationwide"

HOMELAND SECURITY DEMOCRATS: "The TSA should ensure that every screener and supervisor is subject to, and demonstrates mastery over, all TSA screening procedures. The TSA and DHS should conduct routine tests at

multiple airports to ensure that training is conducted appropriately and that active screeners are applying the training adequately. All screeners and supervisors should have rigorous recurrent training on an annual basis that consists more than cursory tests of routine screening procedures."

INSPECTOR GENERAL: "DHS needs to require more meaningful reporting by grantees, and develop performance standards, so that it can track their progress more accurately; work with grantees to collect and identify best practices and strategies that speed spending; and assist state planning efforts by accelerating the development of Federal guidelines for first responder capabilities, equipment, training, and exercises."

HOMELAND SECURITY DEMOCRATS: "As originally proposed in the PREPARE Act, the Select Committee's recently-passed bipartisan legislation would combine multiple DHS first responder preparedness grants into a single 'First Responder Grant Program.' This new program would distribute grants to states and localities to achieve preparedness capability needs based on the current threats and vulnerabilities they face. The grant program will be administered by one office within DHS, in order to establish a single organizational entity that is responsible for maintaining all information on the grants and regular communication with all grant recipients. By defining—for the first time—the preparedness needs of our communities, this legislation would provide an appropriate, sustained level of investment in preparedness for our first responders."

INSPECTOR GENERAL: "While the TTIC and the TSC are working toward building an integrated intelligence analysis capability, there is still confusion within the federal government and among state and local governments about the respective roles of TTIC, TSC, and the Information Analysis (IA) component of IAIP."

HOMELAND SECURITY DEMOCRATS: "Confusion is the order of the day across federal, state and local governments when it comes to understanding how the Department of Homeland Security, the Terrorist Threat Integration Center, and the Terrorist Screening Center integrate their intelligence analysis efforts. And if government officials don't understand the process, then confusion reigns supreme with the general public, too."

INSPECTOR GENERAL: "Implement a process to routinely assess the human resources needs along the northern border and a plan to meet those needs."

HOMELAND SECURITY DEMOCRATS: "The Administration should immediately develop and implement a comprehensive national border staffing strategy that will allow DHS to effectively deploy its personnel (border crossing inspectors, Border Patrol agents, and support staff) and technology. The staffing strategy should maintain the border agencies' original missions of preventing drug traffic and illegal immigrants from entering the U.S.; meet staffing levels established in the USA PATRIOT Act and Border Security Act; and build in flexibility to meet changing security needs of the future. "

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